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Ester Banks.

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THE KATE PRINCE POEMS OF PASSION

'Just a bit of badness
Man and woman's madness
Studies of life's sadness
Versed with ink and pen."

By KATE PRINCE

HELEN NORWOOD HALSEY, Publishers
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BY

ESTAR BANKS

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To all my friends both on and off the stage
I do commend my rhymes; and trust the sage
Will not condemn the flaws and faults that rise
And do offend, with blot and blur, the eyes;
For in each life a hidden truth doth lie
And longs to wake, yet knows not how, or why,
So in my way I simply try to find
The key, wherewith the heart unlocks the mind:
For sorrows, joys, ambitions, failures—all
Emotions, that through passions rise and fall,
Are set to music, line for line, and I
Their tune would play, and so through verse I try
To sing the strains, that one may understand
And laugh or cry, as Truths, at my command,
Awake—and half in earnest, half in play,
Bid me reclothe them, for the light of day.
I place upon the broad, wide stream of thought
My Book of Verse, with dedications wrought
Within, that you may weave a web of dreams
With threads the poems spin—from what life means.

PART I

APPLES

Long, long ago an apple grew
 Upon a tree of learn—ing;
And mortal man and woman too
 For it were always yearn—ing!

They watched it large and larger grow,
 Until its sides seemed burst—ing,
And for the mellow ripeness there
 They had an awful thirst—ing!

With look and sigh, as if to die,
 He caught the branch and—shook it!
She shut one eye, and shinneyed high,
 Then boldly, bravely—took it!

They both bit in till, chin to chin,
 Their mouths were full and churn—ing,
While fiery flames licked up their brains
 And set their bodies burn—ing!

And still we mortals sell our souls
 That selfsame wisdom earn—ing;
Yet though we eat the apple up
 We're always, ever, learn—ing.

DREAMING

Were you with me, or I with you
This would I do:

Let both my arms around you twine
Softly my cheek creep close to thine
Till ev'ry heartbeat answers mine—

E'en 'twere a sin!

I'll crush thy lips until nerve-wire
Shall quiver in its mad desire
To reach the sea of liquid fire

That burns within;

I'll drain your sweetness with my will,
And claim each breath, as mine—until
The senses of the soul grow still,
And you I win!

Thus would I do, were you with me,
Or I with you.

THE ANSWER

Well, here's my trunk; you see 'tis small
And really will not do at all

To put your clothes therein;
I wish 'twere bigger, "'deed I do,"
Just big enough to hold us two—

I know the wish a sin!
And yet, the thought is sweet to me
To be locked in close—close to thee!

'Tis Nature's hungry cry!
To let your arms around me twine,
To drink of passion's magic wine—
Ah, me: to live each sigh!
If we could still the aching pain
That follows sweetness—if the brain
Could only ever sleep!

Why then, this empty heart of mine
Would yield its passion, yes, to thine—

And care not what it reap!
But O the woe! and O the pain!
Life would not be the same again

When my bright dream was o'er;
And so—'tis best the trunk is small
And you and I keep from the fall
That Adam made of yore:

The man is stronger—always so—
I'm just a woman, weak—you know,

Ah, weak—and willing, too!
Tempt me no more—I must deny!
Forget—and let the days go by
Just as they used to do!

OUT OF TUNE

A Failure! Yes, full well I know
The years that come, break as they go:
Break—with a mourning, moaning cry!
My laugh? 'Tis but a sobbing sigh
That echoes, in a smothered strain,
The song the soul sings in its pain.

I've tried so long to live upright,
Watched others climb clear out of sight
Just stepping on the rounds of sin
While Fame and Fortune both they win!
O heavy heart! To Hope you wed—
And Faith, thy new-born babe, lies dead.

I'm tired clinging to the right;
It's dark ahead—there is no light;
And wealth and warmth, they tempt me so—
Ah, flesh is weak—I must let go!
It is so hard—this "being good"—
One never may be understood.

There is no God to answer prayer;
There is no virtue, anywhere!
I've clung to righteousness too long—
It's lost for me life's sweetest song.
One cannot struggle so—to live—
My strength has gone; Forget—forgive!

UNREST

Why need I fear immortal wrath
 For worldly snares?
Why need I keep in virtue's path
 When no one cares?
Why should I rein my nature in—
Whip back the passion that within
Surges and seethes with thoughts of sin—
 When no one cares?

Why must I keep from Love's embrace
 Because of shame?
Why turn aside my heated face—
 Am I to blame
That all the life within me cries
For love, and lips that kiss their sighs,
Till heart unites with heart—and dies—
 Am I to blame?

If God this nature gave to me —
 The fruit it bears
Must all be gathered from the tree—
 There's no one cares.
So why should arms clasp empty air?
Why hunger for the fruit that's there?
I'll eat my fill—'tis my affair!
 For no one cares.

BITTERNESS

Am I less the woman
Because my heart is human
And filled with love and life? God placed it there!
Do I commit a sin
When my wild thoughts within
Send forth their germs to generate in air?

Does not all Nature give
The birds and beasts that live
The liberty to love as they desire?
What right has mortal man
To alter God's great plan
By framing laws to govern inward fire!

What if the flashing flame
Lick loose, and leap its claim
That it may brighter burn and warmer glow;
Taking love for fuel,
Dropping law—'tis cruel—
God did not mean to bind our natures so.

The passion that's divine
Is spun in spirit fine
And woven in the woof of—long ago;
And it has mastered man
E'en since the world began—
The life of love is passion's undertow!

Man's law shall not control
The fibres of my soul!
'They cling too close to clay—that is my own;
My life, I'll live anew
As Nature meant me to—
And answer for my sins to God, alone.

DEFIANCE

What right have YOU, Just God of Heaven,
To judge the soul! Have you not given
The immortal force, passion leaven
To mould its clay?

Did not you sow the silken seed,
Well knowing life would feast and feed
Upon its fruit—while like a weed
'Twould spread and slay?

Blind in my faith I plucked the flower,
Drinking its love kissed pollen shower
Until my senses—drunk with power—
Conquered my Will.

And when I struggled to let go,
The tendrils twined around me, so—
They closer, closer drew—till, lo!
My heart stood still!

And when I cried in my despair,
Called out for help, from you, in prayer—
You answered not! You did not care!
And so—I fell!

Oh, for my sin I do bemoan:
Am I to blame, must I atone?
You left me here, weak and alone—
Love paved my hell.

Have you the right to judge me, then?
You, the Maker of all men,
Who planted every passion when
You lifened stone!

Dare You condemn! The very grave
Entombs but ashes of YOUR slave!
I did the best I could! You gave!
Take back—YOUR OWN.

AH, ADÉ!

I would like your voice to woo me
In your winsome winning way;
While your kisses sweetly sue me—
And I'd pay! Yes, I'd pay!
I would like your heart to hold me
Cradled in its love, for aye!
While your burning eyes blindfold me—
Eyes of gray, eyes of gray!

I would like to have you whisper:
"Sweetheart, love me—love me, pray!"
While I softly sigh my answer:
"Yes, alway! Yes, alway!"
I would like your warm caresses,
Close within your arms I'd stay;
While my soul in song confesses—
Ah, Adé! Ah, Adé!

RENUNCIATION

Yes, go!
My wish it is not, for
I fain would keep you—e'en
I know
Your love would bring me naught
But woe!
Yes—Go!

Kiss me!
Again—again! Until
The life within awakes
To BE!
And answers every call
From thee—
Kiss me!

Ah, go!
My senses reel with pain—
I want you—oh, I want
You so!
And yet, it must not be,
I know.
Ah—Go!

LIFE'S KISS

Give me the eyes of bonnie blue
That talk and tempt one, as they woo
So shyly, surely do they sue.
Give me the arms that close enfold
And smother with affection bold!
Give me the love that speaks—untold!

I want a mouth that mine may meet
To give and take the kisses sweet
That ripen there, at each heart-beat;
I want the joy of every bliss
That God has planted in me—this
Is all I ask of Life—its Kiss.

I'll break the branches that entwine
The grapes that cluster on Life's vine—
I'll crush the fruit and drink the wine,
And then—the blue of Love's Great Sea,
By red Desire, shall purpled be—
And sweep in flood tide over me!

When you have to buy your heaven
 With a bit of gold;
When you have to use that heaven
 To make rapture hold;
Then indeed you are forsaken,
 Life's sweet dream is old!
Better far to leave untaken
 Love that's bought or sold.

AN ELEGY

And then—YOU came! And all my night
Was flecked with stars, whose twinkling light
Spangled the tears—smiles' undertow—
Crushed from the heart by weight of woe!
And glowing rays of mystic might
Swept over me with fierce delight,
As you Love's story did unfold—
The sweetest story ever told!

And when your soul cried out to mine,
The Star of Life so bright did shine
I trembled 'neath its burning glow—
I was afraid to love you so!
All of my soul's best offerings,
All—but the spirit's covering—
I gave to you; all but the Flame
That licks at law with tongue of shame.

Someway, somehow, a cloud o'ercast—
A mist of misery, dense and vast,
That choked me with the fog of fear
That I might lose—might lose you, dear;
Blinded by pain, I stumbled on—
I lost my way! my Star was gone!
To other hearts I turned—but, oh,
They wearied so, they wearied so!

I want the whisper of your sighs,
I crave the starlight of your eyes;
My arms are empty, and I cry:
“Come to me, sweetheart; let me lie
Close to thy heart—’tis Life Divine!
Give me the love that once was mine;
I care not, be it endless woe.
I want you—oh, I want you so!”

THAT'S ALL

When your heart awakes—some day—

To woo, to woo!

Sings love's song the sweet old way,

Calls its mate—she will obey

And come to you.

Life is but a passing show—

A rise, a fall!

Sip its pleasures as you go,

Let joy drown pain—laugh at woe.

That's all, that's all!

CROWN ME THY KING

Open your heart to me, Darling,
The rosebuds within whisper low;
Sweet-briar rosebuds—swaying there—
So modest, they blush to blow. O,
Heart-birds are singing their mate-song,
As shyly thine eyes pledge to mine;
Soul answers soul in the Silence—
God gave thee to me, thou art mine!
Open thy heart to life's fulness,
Its roses unfold at my call;
Whispering roses—one by one,
I'll gather them, thorns and all—all!
Spin from thy spirit love's sweetness,
And spangle my soul with its sheen:
Wreath me a wreath of thy longings
And crown me thy King, O my Queen!

A HOROSCOPE

(*To Mr. C. I. B.*)

I do not find you very bad!
Confess that I am rather glad;
You make mistakes—bad ones, no doubt;
But innate goodness helps you out.
Your faults are few; the failings there
That weaken, come from women fair;
—The sex attraction! Ah, my man,
You test the tension—when you can!
Blue are your eyes, the blue of gray,
How deep their depths—I dare not say!
The mouth—magnetic, mystic cell—
Where molten fires in kisses dwell!
—I wonder if the lightning play
That darkens blue and deepens gray,
Will flash from out that cell of flame
And burn the lips thine own may claim!
And should it brand with red desire,
—This flushing, flowing, fluid fire—
I wonder if the flames of hell
Will reach to heaven! Stars won't tell!
They only glisten, glimmer, glow—
Wise in their wisdom, for they know
That I, the woman—you, the man—
Are but a part of Life's Great Plan!

THE BRIDE

To Esther

Fate crowns you with her roses,
And as their leaves unfold
They breathe the "old, old story"—
The sweetest ever told!
Deep in the heart of mortal
There buds a blushing flower,
Whose essence is the spirit
That vibrates Soul with power.
Love! 'Tis all of living—
A force that is divine!
Fate crowns you with her roses,
God's gift to thee and thine.

PLEDGING

Should you summon my soul, like the long ago,
With caressing kisses of flame!
I shall answer the call of the blood, I know,
And passion will pulsate the same.
For the wine of desire shall flush at my Will—
And flood o'er thy brain, as I woo!
And your heart will awake with the "old time" thrill
Should I ever come back to you.

I shall bring from the Past the love that you seek,
Alive, with the glow of life's charms;
I will burnish the blushes that blaze thy cheek
And gather you close in my arms;
I shall throw conventions and customs aside
When the call of your love I hear—
Though you cast me away, at turn of the tide,
I will come—yes, come to you, Dear.

JESSIE'S HEART

O Jessie's heart is hard to find,
So well she keeps it hidden;
The mask she wears is but a blind
And no one knows what is behind—
She hides the truth from all mankind
So there may be no "kidden"!
And if by chance a little dart,
Quivering in its fleetness,
Should find the way into her heart
And, clinging there, just break apart
The finest bit of Nature's art—
'Twould poison with its sweetness.

Did you possess the inward fire
That heats the blood to boiling,
And sends the steam up higher, higher,
Until it sings through every wire,
That in and out the spinal spire
Magnet force is coiling!
Then, should her mouth come near your own!
Ah, then! Why I defy you!
You could not let it quite alone—
Unless your heart were made of stone;
A hungry dog will grab 'a bone,
You know as well as I do!

WOMAN'S WAY

When the wheel of fickle Fate
Grinds to grist the marriage state,
Leaving but the husk of hate—

Yet will she stay!

And though her very soul rebel
At his caresses, knowing well
That duty makes of life a hell—

She will obey!

Though love's cup awaits—elsewhere,
Filled with joy of sweetness rare,
She will not drink—does not dare—

Man's law says: Nay!

So life goes on and heart grows ill,
Her soul, it hungers, hungers, till
Its house of clay lies cold and still.

It's Woman's way.

MAN WAY

When man's love grows chill and cold,
And he wearies of the wold
Where the pasture field is old—

He breaks away!

And swiftly to an orchard sweet,
Where ripened fruits fall at his feet,
He plans to feast, and fat, and eat—

As well he may!

For the sky is blue and fair,
And the sun shines everywhere—
Not a thought cloud in the air—

Life is so gay!

No shame for him in carnal sin,
No joy on earth he may not win;
So all without, he takes within.

It is Man's way!

VALENTINE

O Lady, little Lady—
With flitty, flirty eyes!
Who'd dream she was a widow—
So innocent, so wise!
She threw a line at Peter
And caught him from the wings;
She tossed a flower to Harry,
Then tied Paul to her strings;
She warbled words to Charlie,
And now to Smith she sings!
Ah, Lady, little Lady,
Go easy, down the line,
And string your men more gently—
You'll lose your Valentine!

“I” AND “ME”

When Soul and Self their battle fought,
Each with its weapon—Will and Thought;
When “I” triumphant stood o’er “Me,”
Crowned with the strength of victory;
While grovelling low in throe of pain
Desire of flesh lay bleeding—slain!
Did’st think that death of “Self” would free
That Soul of thine? It cannot be!
Spirit and matter are but one
Evolving force, from Greater Sun!
With joy and sorrow so allied
They bridge across the Great Divide;
And though thy curse doth strike and slay
Emotions, that do lead astray—
Mayhap thy “Self” hath need—and so
The gods their gifts do thus bestow
That Soul may purify and glow
All matter, until, white as snow,
Cleansed by fire—the “I” and “Me,”
Flame to a star! A Force—TO BE!

AFFAMÉ

Ah, hold me closer, Love, until
My heart beats one with thine!
And let your kisses breathe their life
In to this soul of mine!

Deep in your eyes low flares the light
That flames my heart with fire;
And as it burns—this font of life—
Love leaps—to meet Desire.

And every nerve is quivering,
As unseen forces rise;
And every sense is shivering
With little heart-bird cries!

Ah, closer hold me—for I know
Thy life completes mine own;
And I would give thee kiss for kiss—
To reap the seed you've sown.

I care not what the world may say,
My sins will I atone;
And God shall judge me in His way—
I'm hungry—and alone!

JUSTICE

Drive out wayward women,
Weak the will therein;
Broken from life's bruises,
Seamed by scarlet sin!
Painted with the brushes
Joy dipped deep in shame—
Weed out the wickedness,
It soils a city's name!

Yes, drive out the woman,
Let her bear the blame;
Man's heart lit the love log,
Woman fanned the flame!
Cast her into chaos,
Hound her—as a hare—
For God has naught to do
With that which brought her there!

Do you know, my sisters,
That the church bell's chime
Sings of saintly virtues,
Hiding vice and crime?
Oh, ye men and women,
Tender be your tone—
There's not one among you
That dares to cast a stone!

So drive out your women,
Bruised and broken toys;
Once they soothed your sorrows,
Jollied in your joys!
Punished—for her passions!
God given, too—
Drive her out! O mortals,
Ye know not what ye do!

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

Weighted by weeds, woven by sin,
Clinging to clay, the Soul within,
Fighting to free its breaking breath,
Waits on the rock of Life for Death.
Madly the waves with mirth and moan
Swirl and swish as they lick the stone;
Tossing their tears in endless chain,
To fill and fall in drops of rain.

Bursting the bolts that pin the Past
In leaden clouds—all fierce and fast—
Thought, molds the maze of misty haze
In living pictures, showing days
When life was budding chaste and coy,
Each bud pink-tinged with blush of joy;
When Hope's bright sun its web unrolled
And spangled Grief with stars of gold.

As year by year life's sorrow grew
The bud lost all its blush rose hue;
Hope's web became a tangled doubt,
And one by one the stars blinked out!
Then Present with its shadows gray
Shrouded Past pictures as they lay
Deep in dream ashes, on life's bed—
With Faith and Hope among them, dead!

O Justice speak! Why is Vice crowned
With Holy Grace, and saintly gowned,
While Virtue hungers for her bread,
And only creeps where Vice may tread?
Poor wearied heart, and worried life,
Broken and bruised in bitter strife!
May Death's dark ocean o'er thee roll
And God, the Maker, claim thy soul!

SLUMMING

A little squall of virtue
Has stirred our social sea,
And whirlpooled into ripples
A minister's decree.
While from the outer circles
Arise in mist of tears,
A little squad of workers,
Who've lived here all these years
And only just discovered
The slimy undertow
That drags down human nature
Into the depths below.

'Tis a very easy matter
The good Lord's own, to pose
When money fills your coffers
And Fate gives you its rose!
Show me the man or woman
Who likes to preach and pray
When money is not proffered
To pave the thorny way!
You waste your time in preaching,
'Tis mockery to those
Who've learned Life's bitter lessons
By cruel knocks and blows.

Just try a Christ-like method
And mingle with your kin;
Go shoeless, hatless, coatless—
Then try to keep from sin!
Take off religion's glasses,
They blind—you cannot see;
The "high" are just as sinful
As those of "low" degree;
'Tis not down in Chinatown
You find the seeds of sin—
The Golden Key of Riches
Locks pith on pith within!

And all your prate and prattle
To do away with crime,
Just makes one very weary
At such a waste of time.
So long as gold and silver
Are life's chief end and aim
You'll find that souls and bodies
Will sink in sin and shame.
So stir the dark pool lightly,
'Twill only be by Fame
That you will be rewarded—
For Sin goes on the same.

I WOULD KNOW

Supposing that I were to throw out a line,
Stirring inner depths of that deep soul of thine;
Softly swaying senses, as with swinging swirl,
I reel off a rhyme that will twist, turn and twirl

The heart to woe!

—It may be so—

Does man have a heart?—I would know!

Supposing a line with the bait of a verse,
Tangles, tying knots, in the love universe!
Finding that the fathoms of man's mental sea
Are not quite so deep as they just ought to be—

For soul to flow!

—It might be so—

Does man have a soul?—I would know!

Supposing that Time were to toss back the years,
Swollen—by regrets—to an ocean of tears;
Sweeping spirit outward, on tide ebbing fast—
As Death stamps the mortal with the Seal of—Past!

To Heaven you go!

—Or is it so—

Does man go below?—I would know!

IT IS WELL

And so you failed! Could you not see
Old—old—the story was to me!
Too long I lived among you men,
Too well I learned your lessons, when
I saw my weaker sisters fall—
With all life's sweetness turned to gall.
'Tis hard to know each glance, each sigh,
Is but the essence of a lie!
That every kiss, though honeyed deep,
Sows but a sin the soul must reap!
The meanest act that one may do
To mortal, is to warmly woo
The love that nestles round the heart,
Tearing its tendrils wide apart.
Then, bleeding in their bitter pain—
All crushed—to throw them back again.
Yet, 'tis life's game! And so you see
The little play 'tween you and me
Was all a farce! We both know well
That lies link Heaven close to Hell.
Should the glowing, glistening spark
Glimmering in my heart—so dark—
Go out, for lack of love and light,
It is HIS will! It must be right.
I'll never drain a drinking cup
Until Truth's measure fills it up;
And then I'll drink it down as wine—
For all God's gifts, by right, are mine!

Yes, you have failed! I say so still,
And say it with all strength of will!
And if you do not know—in what—
I'll tell you, though it be "all rot!"
But let me say a word right here;
Conceit—I have it not, my dear!
The pleasure's yours—all yours, I trow;
Will prove it, if you will allow;
When a man—in truth—sincerely
Says that—women love him dearly!
That he never tries to make 'em;
Does his best, indeed, to shake 'em!
It seems to me, conceit lies—there;
Think it over, friend, with care!
Had I a different woman been—
With reason small and vain, why then
The sweetened words you breathed to me—
"If this were so, why that might be,"
Would soon have won the heart I own—
No woman's heart is made of stone!
But, friend, I know the real from sham.
You did not care for me—a damn!
Love there was not! But when you say
That passion with you, held no sway,
I say: 'tis false! More honest I
Than you, it seems; it is a Lie!
For you had passion—yes, for me—
I knew by intuition! See?

Every nerve thrill in your frame
Answered back to mine! The same
Force governed both; I tell the truth,
Which you deny; and Love, forsooth!
I knew it not! But passion—aye!
Awakened with its hungry cry
And leaped in answer to your call!
I—held it back! Yes, held it all!
YOU did the tempting, friend—not I—
And so your failure is, no lie!
You say, I led you on, to throw
You down at last? I tell you: No!
I met you on your own Thought plain
Gave joy for joy, and pain for pain!
To laugh or joke at any man
Whose nature meets my own, I can
But say—is cruelty I shun!
I never crush a heart—for fun!
Yes, you were kind, I know, that's true;
But I was just as kind as you!
The farce is over, and the light
Of lessons learned is my—Good Night!

QUESTION:

“Why is it that all the poetesses who write the ultra-passionate sort of thing never look it when you come to know them personally?”

ANSWER:

(To Don Marquis.)

Why do they never look it? Don Marquis,
Hush, listen! I would whisper unto thee:
 Suppose I call your bluff,
 And really look the stuff?
What an “norful vicked” city this would be!
And our Comstock busy buzzing like a bee.
 But let me tell you, man,
 Passion poetesses can
Tear a manly heart to tatters with the pen—
For we know the little weaknesses of men!
 But to look it! Not just yet—
 We are not a suffragette!
Our vote cannot control you naughty men!
Now let me ask of you a “why and when”
 Cubs that write and reason well,
 Do they look it? Yes, like—’ell!
At least the ones I know look so to me—
Of course I have not met you, Don Marquis!

PART II

To Professional Friends:

We live in a world of our own,
 You and I!
And bubbles we blow
 Of laughter and woe,
Which over the footlights are blown
 For to fly!
We watch them alight on the ear
 And the eye,
And scarcely dare breathe with the fear
 That they die!
For it's rise or fall
 At the beck and call
Of the buoys who bell, loud and clear,
 Every cry!
On a puff of praise they will glow,
 Sailing high;
While sadly they float on the flow
 Of a sigh:
These dainty dream castles we blow—
 You and I!

LUANA

To Laurette Taylor:

(Bird of Paradise Co.)

O Luana, our Luana,
With thy charm of form and face,
With the quaint and plaintive sweetness
Of thy soft seductive grace;
Arms and lips that joy in living,
Giving all for love's embrace!
Witching, wooing, winsome maiden,
With the warm blood of thy race.

When your "stranger husband" wearies
Of the love he crucifies;
When your hurt heart knowing—knowing,
Beats and breaks in broken cries:
"Oh, I lose my Paula, lose him!"
Then, with tears, we sympathize—
'Tis taboo, for lives mismated;
Ah, "Taboo"—the song of sighs!

Child of earth with heart of heaven,
Life is over when love dies!
Back to Puna—to your people—
Where the "black sand" ever lies;
Where the angry Pelee retches,
Reaching for the sacrifice!
Ah, Luana! "Aloha, oe!"
Sweetest Bird of Paradise.

To Mr. Frederick Schrader:

(Editor New York Dramatic Mirror)

It was good to get your paper,
Nice of you to praise my "lay";
For I love to know my verses
Reach and touch the soul, alway.
All my poems sing their music
To the heart chords of the day:
Chimes of gladness, chimes of sadness,
Meet in melody, and sway
Emotions—until, uprising,
They shall break in foaming spray
O'er the face of man and woman,
There to mould and mark the clay!
So my songs come from the Silence—
Where the echoes die away:
Where the wraiths of joy and sorrow
Write the music mortals play.

PERHAPS

To Bijou Fernandez:

Perhaps the days are dreary,
The city hot and dry;
Maybe you're office weary
With work that goes awry;
Perhaps the mind be heavy
With tears that stupify!
Maybe you're lone and lonesome
As Time drags hours by;
Perhaps your heart is hungry
For woods, and sea, and sky.
A thought of mountain laurel,
Dream wafted, swiftly brings
A breath of woodland sweetness—
A song the Silence sings!
The whispering of tree-tops,
That rock the wee nestlings;
The swaying of the branches
Where Robin Redbreast swings;
The crisping of the moss,
As it creeps, and climbs, and clings!
The roses softly rustling
To bees with pollened wings;
The breezes sougning, sighing—
The song the Silence sings!
The call of Nature's church chimes
In star-belled laurel rings—
So let your thirsty spirit
Drink of the dreams it brings,
And maybe unseen forces

Will mold the Thoughts to Things!

To Mr. William Gillette:

I am going to ask a favor,
I trust you'll not say Nay;
I'm going to ask for compliment
That I may see you play.
My ship has not been sighted yet,
Altho' I watch each day—
The sunshine mists my years so fast
They mass in clouds of gray.
I am tired of "Eugenics,"
And "punch to order" plays;
Of machine-made stars, whose talent
An angel fans to blaze!
Am weary of the picture types
Wound up to walk in tune;
Drilled by a boy director—one
Who "knows it all" too soon!
I am tired of stage setting,
Of furniture and "props"!
Of realistic scenery,
And fancy painted drops.

And I long to see good acting,
Like that of yesterdays,
When our artists, full of genius,
Would catch and hold the gaze;
While their voices, rich and tuneful,
Thrilled through and through the heart—
And one did live the story, as
The actor played the part.
Give me a bit of sunlight—the
Enjoyment of your play!
A little word from you, Gillette,
Will give me right of way.
If I have overstepped the bounds,
Your pardon, here, I pray:
Let Present ring the curtain down
And Past throw out my lay.

To Guy Bates Post:

Just a verse—a line or two,
I leave here on the stand, for you:

I think that Guy Bates Post should know
That rhymes on love are all the go!
They sell the best! A heart on springs
Keeps mortal from immortal wings!
As long as brain can pull apart
The pollened petals of a heart,
And, bee-like, shape the sweetness caught
Into a verse of honeyed thought—
Just so long will man feed self,
And shrink his soul on passion pelf.
Perhaps there maybe one or two
Prefer some other food—like you?
But they are few and far between
And often bloom and blush, unseen!
I write for money, Mr. Post:
Write that which brings me in the most—
I like it not, but love, in rhyme,
Will catch the public every time.

HELLO BROADWAY

To George M. Cohan:

We are glad once more to greet you, George Co-han,
We are proud of you as manager and man!

Our hats we doff to you
Because of putting through
A wonderful menu,
With service of Revue!

On the basis of American-made plan!
We are glad indeed to see "Hello Broadway,"
And the dry and quiet humor you portray:

We like your dancing feet,
Your jokes are always neat,
And Collier is a treat—
The fete is so complete,

With its hundred lively artists on display.
We are glad the Astor Theatre is well fed
For so many White Way starvelings now lie dead!

We rather hate to brag
About our country's Flag—
America's no fag!

Stars *lead* on that dear Rag!—

So "Hip," for Hello Broadway, Yankee born and
bred.

To Forbes-Robertson:

I want to see your Hamlet—yes, I do!
Shakesperian artist actors are so few:
My memory recalls but one or two
Whose sunset glory yet pervades the blue;
Where spirit force, with power ever new,
Relights the Greater Crown and holds to view
Each pointed star evolving in its flame—
A thought, an act still burning with the name
Fate blazoned on the diadem, with Fame!
A twinkling star for which we play the game!
A gem alive, with genius glowing through
The white light of a soul, in opalescent hue!
A molten fire of intellectual dew!
Reach up! Perchance that star be Crown, for you.

ACTOR to CRITIC

O man of many letters!
O umpire of our game!
In writing up your review
On play and players' fame,
Why praise a painted portrait
And not the artist's name?
'Twas I that caught the colors
With Art's unerring aim,
And toned that gentlewoman—
Out from the Past she came;
"A breath of pure air, study,"
The skill for that I claim!
The actor paints the picture,
The author makes the frame.
'Twas I brought out those colors,
Oh, man of judgment—shame!
To praise so well my portrait
And rob me of my name.

To Mr. A. E. Erlanger:

(Sign of the Rose Co.)

“Stick close to me,” I heard you say—
I did! and now there’s —ell to pay!
The Rose that blossomed ’neath your care
Was chilled by New York’s frosty air,
Then broken off and left to die—
Each leaf a tear, a sob, a sigh!
But other buds are on the tree—
Why should there not be one for me?
I’m looking, looking—every day,
For some good part in some great play:
One that will last a season through!
It seems to me, it’s up to you
To place me; so get busy, man,
And do the very best you can:
I’ll play the part, you get the play!
I’m weary walking down Broadway.

To Ada Gilman:

(The Miracle Man Co.)

Within the heart of this red rose
The seed of friendship grows and grows;
And as each petal of the flower
Expands, unfolds, may blessings shower
Their gifts of health and wealth o'er you
Till joys of sunshine sparkle through
And light thy life and make more bright
The path that leads thro' worry's night.
Ah, Ada—many years ago

 You walked on rose leaves, this I know;
But velvet carpets do not last
When days drag years into the Past!
And roses wither—blow away—
When eye grows dim and hair turns gray.
'Twas ever so, since life began:
Part of the great supernal Plan.
So drink of pleasure, all you can—
Here's success to "The Miracle Man."

To Mr. Lee Shubert:

I feel that I must write you, Mr. Lee,
And thank you for your courtesy to me;
 For the play was very fine,
 I enjoyed it, every line—
And I loved the little lady called Haidee;
 Though she be an English “light”!
 And I but a Yankee “sprite”
We “make up” much alike, strange as it may be.
 From her head down to her toes,
 She’s an artist—and that goes!
Not a detail did she miss, I’ll guarantee.
 And of course I praise that Boy!
 For in truth he was a joy!
And a dandy little actor, you agree?
 I enjoyed it all—and so
 I must write that you may know
I appreciate civility shown me;
And my thanks are surely due you, Mr. Lee.

THE HOMELY WOMAN

To Maude Eburne as "Coddles":

Ah, woman—homely woman—
With drab brown faded hair,
Drawn tightly back from features,
All sallow lined by care:
Your hungering emotions,
So restless in their lair,
Reach out through shrinking senses
For joys they long to share!
Your lips of fallow sweetness—
Unseeded, thin and spare,
Await the whet of wooing
From lover—debonair!
Your gawky awkward figure,
Grotesquely squat and square,
With arms outstretched to gather
The mate you fain would snare!
Your white lashed eyes, so eager,
Their love lights flick and flare!
The mouth that cries for kisses—
'Tis more than we can bear,
This comedy of pathos!
—A cruelty, unfair!—
We watch the disappointment
That drapes you with despair,
As dreams of warm embraces
Mirage in frosty air!
And life glooms up before you,
—Unbroken darkness there—
A lonely, lonesome woman!
The burden that you bear.

Out from our spray of laughter
We toss a tear or two—
The sob, that breaks a heart cloud,
Ere smiles may filter through
And touch the graying shadows
With sunlight, from the blue.
Ah, why are life's great pleasures
Alotted to the few!
Why should the fairer maiden
Sip wine of rosy hue
While ev'ry homely woman
Drinks dregs of bitter rue?
For all the human passions
Flame red in her veins, too,
And flush to flood of fever—
Athirst for mate to woo.
Fate marred so in that making:
Did roughly, rashly hew
The shell that covers spirit—
For law, not love, did brew.
And so—her unfed body,
All warped and withered grew.
The soul is ever seeking
Its own life to renew;
And drinking, always drinking,
Love's effervescent dew,
To still the hungry heart ache
And Nature's thirst subdue!
Ah, woman, there are many
Worn, weary souls like you.

To Wm. A. Brady:

When "Over Night" is "Going Some"
And Broadway looks less shady;
When "Baby Mine" is making "mon,"
I'll get in touch with Brady!
And if my purse gets on the bum
I'll not be a "fraidy,"
But don my hat, spit out my gum—
'Cause I'm a "High Born Lady"!
And to the Playhouse I will come
To make "a touch" on Brady!

PRINCESS OF HAWAII

To Bessie Barriscale:

Dainty little pagan Princess,
Born where sunsets purple night;
Trying to become a Christian,
Struggling up—"up to the light!"
Bravely saying to your people:
"Prayers to Pele they not right!"
Yet, a god is but a symbol
Of a Force beyond the sight.

Eyes like twinkling stars are flashing
All the love-light heart may hold:
And they gleam and glow and glisten
As the soul its leaves unfold.
When the tempest of life's passion
Sweeps in storm clouds o'er thy wold
Then we watch the soul lights dying
As "white husband's" love grows cold.

And our hearts are sick with sorrow
As your spirit, strong and true,
Smothers back its hungry heartache
With the sobbing cry, "Taboo!
'Tis so hard to be white woman
And to learn what not to do!
Paula, I go with Ho-hé-no,
I not good enough for you!"

Up the fire mountain, chanting,
Poising on the brink—alone!
True to all your race traditions,
You, as sacrifice, atone!
While the licking, lashing lava
Leaps—and claims you, Pele's own!
Ah, Luana, little princess,
You to us a soul have shown.

A THOUGHT ROSE

To Mr. Ben Giroux:

A rose of thought I give to you,
Each leaf a dream doth hold:
A little sparkling drop of dew
Where sunbeams dance on film of blue,
While visions they unfold.
And as this gauze of lustrous hue
Descends, and vapor covers you
With wealth of joys untold,
May sunshine light your life anew
And every shadow melt into
A glory mist of gold.

PANSY MAIDEN

To Miss Grace Gray:

Well, my Pansy Maiden,
Where were you to-day?
I called you up at noontime
From Broad street Penn railway;
Of course you would be missing,
Most always that's the way.
I'm with a new production,
A "live one," so they say;
It's called "The Man Who Would Live"
—Of Past and Present way.
William Hurlbut wrote it, and,
Believe me—'tis some play!
We're booked a week in Washington;
Chicago sees us then,
And if the Fates are willing
A "run" till Lord knows when!
I wanted much to lunch you
And talk with you again:
But "Press" phone was not able
To find you in your den.
(I only had an hour
For you and William Penn!)
O Purple Pansy Peggy,
Why were you missing—why?
A bite, a sup, o'er plate and cup,
A word or two, a "How de do,"
"God bless you," and "Good bye."

CITY HALL STATUE, PHILADELPHIA

To William Penn:

We give you greeting, William Penn,
Sentry o'er all within your ken;
The bird of paradise doth coo
"Al-o-ha nui"—love to you.
Come down and see our wonder play,
We'll crown you with a flower "lei."
Come watch us flutter on the stage,
And beat our wings in sorrow's cage.
Tho' golden coins may gild its bars,
Tho' silver chains the twinkling stars,
We want but praise where praise is due—
So, Father Penn, "that's up to you!"
Ah, come on down, be flesh again;
Unlock the gateway, Keystone Penn;
Keep on your dear old hat and frock,
Show us the cradle that did rock
When mankind quit the baby shop
And fed on courage, drop by drop,
Until his spirit, strong and well,
Rang LIBERTY from FREEDOM'S BELL!
O mighty man of long ago,
You still us, thrill us, with your glow,
(For we are chips of that same block
That "Yankee" sprang from—Plymouth Rock.)
Our hearts are warm for olden days,
When men were men, with all men's ways,
And women sweet in motherhood—
Braved all for home, and God, and good,
O! Father Penn, come down, come down,
And welcome us to Quaker Town.

To Hazel Harroun:

The mist of mental weariness
That makes one's life so gray,
So dull and dark with dreariness,
Crowds close o'er thy pathway;
So may my thoughts as wishes bright
Line every cloud for you,
And pierce the shadows with their light
Until the Sun shines through.

To the Lost Critic:

And so for you the time has come
To change: Hast thou outgrown thy home?
Or has the smoke from angry gun
Shut out thy light, ere day was done!
Has thy star set? Or will it shine
On other papers, space and line
Alight and sparkling, as of yore?
Art down and out, or do you score?
Will you no more with artist skill
Pen praises, with a critic's quill?
Will you no more our failings tell?
—Giver of heaven, maker of hell!—
I fear me! And I fain would know
The why, and when, and where you go.
A dread of evil creeps o'er me
When I walk up Broadway and see
The purple lights that flick and flare
A name that once was "golden glare."

For when one's gray and bald and old
They die, and mourners then do fold
In purple! Ah, I suffocate
For fear that some such awful fate
Hath met with you! To know—I write,
For superstition holds me quite!
Believe me—we, who on the stage
Trace living pictures, for the sage,
Will miss the man who played life's game
With pen and paper—winning fame.
We hope to welcome you again,
Enjoy the brilliance of you pen.
But O be red or white or blue—
Don't spotlight, with a purple hue—
We like you best in black on white!
You get me? Then I'll say Good Night.

To Elizabeth Nelson:

We are merely bits of clay
Moulded by our reason;
Ev'ry thought is molten spice,
Human flesh to season;
Every action makes or mars
By its trust or treason.
Gather smiles from life's pathway,
Seed their joys for sowing;
Sprinkle them in sorrow hearts
Where sad tears are flowing;
Ev'ry kindly deed you do
Leavens Soul—for growing.

To the Bachelor Mason of Zetland Lodge, Toronto:

(1908: April 12 to 20)

A merry widow—I you see!
Not any man keeps tabs on me!
I rather like my lot, you know,
So “goo-goo” eyes with me don’t go.
But there are others you may woo,
For Yankee girls are sweet to sue!
So hustle, man, get busy—do!
Somewhere awaits a wife for you!
We greet you, as we meet to dine—
Come over here, the water’s fine!

We dip our Glory Flag—so true—
We love its stripes and starry blue,
And yet we like old England, too;
You drink to us, we’ll drink to you!
The Zetland Lodge, of men so fair,
Have gathered all the fruit o’er there,
And left you, without peach or pear—
’Twas mean of them, but don’t you care;
There’s luscious fruit across the line—
Come over here—the water’s fine!

So very cross and gray you’ve grown—
Perhaps ’tis living all alone!
The Higher Force says “two by two”—
Go to it, man, it’s up to you!
This life is short, asleep you lie;
Wake up! Don’t let a day go by;
Cut out the whisky, “rock and rye,”
And listen to the heart-bird’s cry:
Sip thou of love, ’tis like old wine—
Come over here—the water’s fine!

*To a Toronto Mason of Zetland Lodge No. 326,
F. & A. M., March 8, 1913*

A Bird of Paradise am I,
With wings full grown, so I fly high!
But younger birds are on the wing
And close to earth they swirl and swing;
There's chicken, squab, a quail or two—
"Some pickings!" Yes, perhaps, for you!
That is, if you are single yet
And looking for a "marriagette!"
Get busy, man, put salt around,
The "Bird" will soon light on your ground.
Our Yankee Stars shall shine for you,
So dip your Bars of Red and Blue,
And welcome us with voice and pen,
Drink to our health, O Zetland men!
We've left the States and cross the line,
We're over here—the water's fine!
'Twas years ago—five years ago—
The "Zetland" crossed Ontario,
And through Niagara's open door
Sailed F. & A. M.'s by the score!
Each member of that merry crew
Had wife or sweetheart—all but you!
You stood alone, without a mate—
Ah, curses on such cruel fate!
Hotel Imperial dined and wined
A jolly crowd that day, I mind.
If you in Canada have found
The "Peaches" scarce, pray, come around
And see "The Bird of Paradise,"
Believe me, Yankee wives are nice!
You're growing old, throw out your line,
There's plenty fish—the water's fine!

To Boston:

The Bird of Paradise hath come
To nest awhile, within thy home.
And 'neath a golden crimson sky
On purple rocks the brown men lie,
And mellow mystic music thrum
In time and tune, on muffled drum—
With tone so wierdly, wildly sweet,
The heart is caught in afterbeat;
Here love's own story doth unfold—
Forever new, if ever old—
While life's great law rounds out a right
That black is black and white is white;
For halves to make a whole complete
Must match—'tis Nature's law—and meet.
When mind and matter meet and mate
On equal plain love seals their fate.
E'en from the depths of drunken night
Love lifts a soul up "to the Light."
But in the darkness of despair
Lies he, who fever feeds his lair!
For flesh that by itself be fed
Makes love a lust, and life is dead.
Luana, finding lips and arms
Without the mind, soon lose their charms,
True to tradition, pays her toll—
And Pele's fire rebirths a soul.
So from a story of the day
We learn the law love must obey:
Let race mate race, if ye be blest,
For "East is East, and West is West."

Ah, Boston, you of brain renown,
Your praise is sweet to me, I own;
For I am "Yankee," and adore
Your dear old city more and more.
I love the Common with its trees,
Its frog pond and the old settees,
The Public Garden, Beacon Hill—
Their memories—they haunt me still—
The State House, with its golden dome—
I'm Boston born, it is my home.
And so I greet you with my rhyme,
And love you, love you, all the time.

CATS

(Overheard on Broadway)

Cats! Ever see them? Well, I say!
Just you walk along Broadway
Where the forty's run to fifty's,
Where the naughty's and the nifty's
Trot the tra-la every day!
In the noon time, in the night time,
In the play time, in the fight time,
Gently purring, softly slurring,
Tapping feet and velvet paws;
Flirting, flitting, spatting, spitting,
Archly scratching with their claws!
Ever see them? Well, I say!
Just you walk along Broadway.

BROADWAY

(Overheard on Fifth Avenue)

A winter wind is whistling
O'er the famous Great White Way;
And dignity is damaged
At the billboards' bold display;
Artistic sense is shattered
By electric sign array—
For white lights spot the side shows
Where the red light burns—alway.
The ticket speculators
Hawk hungrily for prey
'Mid the fervid, florid flashing
Of a new eugenic play;
No more Majestic theatres
Impressive power convey—
The printing plastered on them
Would a circus best portray!
The plays are fairly reeking
With the filth of plots one loathes;
And the fetid white slave lust
Sweeps disease before the nose!
The Stars, with few exceptions,
Have no talent to disclose—
Perhaps a shapely body,
With a garter and a hose!
While always in the background
Wings the angel—buying clothes!
The cast is "just imported,"
The manager so blows;
He has no use for actors,
"It is types that make the shows!"
Why wonder wind is whistling
And frost on Broadway grows!

THE INVITATION

To Kate Prince:

I'd really like to meet you,
 "Hully gee!"
And take you out and treat you,
 One—two—three!
If I make the proper bluff
Are you gay and game enough
To call it, and go down the line with me—
 You agree?

A taxi at the stage door
 Is your cue!
A bottle and a bird is
 Not taboo?
To the L'aiglon King Cafe
We will swiftly speed away,
For the jolly little cover laid for two;
 Say, Yes—do!

ANSWER TO INVITATION

To Mr. C.:

I wish that I might greet you

Man,—but then

If I went once am 'fraid I'd

Go—again!

I'd like to have you meet me

And at the L'aiglon treat me,

But I never dine or wine with married men

Am more than—ten!

I have left the “chicken” stage,

As you see;

A bottle and a bird will

Not tempt me!

You may have loads of money

And words of sweetest honey,

But that is not enough for—“Hully gee!”

So sor—ree!

SELFISH?

(Published by *Daily Globe*, Nov. 12, 1914)

Am I selfish? Prithee, tell me!
For my heart lies dead and cold,
 Smothered by a hated loathing
 Since I saw the food and clothing
Massed within a great ship's hold—
To be carried to a country
 War has lashed with murder bold!
For around her lie great Nations,
Rich in olden lore and gold;
 Theirs the duty to receive her,
 Feed and clothe, assist, relieve her—
Wrap her closely in their fold.

Am I selfish? Tell me truly—
For my heart is "sic and sair"
 At the misery and sorrow,
 At the breaking of the morrow,
Of the people over there;
Yet, before a war fund window,
 Hatless, coatless legs all bare—
Stand two little ragged urchins,
Hunger stamped upon the pair:
 And I hear one say: "By golly!
 Wish you had that jacket, Molly,
And those wooly things to wear!"

Am I selfish? Pray you, tell me!
All Broadway is whispering "No!"

For her actors—e'en the gentry—

Born and bred in this, our country,
Pace the pavements to and fro;
While within our theatres, acting,
English artists give the show!

Must Americans, so generous,
Starve for bread and eat of crow

While the English actors batten,

While their pocketbooks they fatten!
Shielded by their country's woe?

Am I selfish—say you so?

All my reason answers—NO!

MY WORD

Hark! The British lion's growling,
As he crouches o'er his slain;
Watch him sniffing, sneering, snarling—
Filled with blood his hoary mane!
Hear that angry roar of vengeance
As a screaming, hissing shell
Bursts into a tongue of fire,
Spitting hell! Spitting hell!

Hush! A cry comes o'er the ocean—
England's army call for men!
And for women—God! they need them
To protect the lion's den.
Where, oh where, is Mrs. Pankhurst,
Where are you, O Christabel?
Pelt the foe with "Votes for women!"
Give 'em 'ell! Give 'em 'ell!

Ye—disabled—English actors—
“Gad, my word!” “It’s bally rum!”
That you’re forced to play the coward
In a country far from “hum.”
Try to build your broken bodies,
Where the nation’s pride should dwell—
Take your canes, your spats, your luggage—
“Get ter ’ell! Get ter ’ell!”

We will loan to you OUR courage,
Grown to Liberty, so vast,
Birthed to Freedom’s martial music
In the years so long gone past,
When America’s great eagle
Swung upon our Iron Bell—
When we men and when we women
Fought like hell! Fought like hell!

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PART III

YOU AND I

If you and I could
 Wake the Past,
And live those happy days again,
Singing the songs our hearts sang then—
 I'd sleep at last!
Methinks my life would brighter be
If I might speak once more, to thee;
E'en for a day—just you and me—
Ah Memory! You
 Only give
The echo of a sweet refrain;
I want voice melody—again!
 For that, I live.

O TIRED EYES

(To Mrs. C. D. F.)

Oh, Tired Eyes

Thy longing light

Doth reach far out into the night

Of sorrow's sighs!

While searching, seeking everywhere

For Peace—a pearl of lustre rare—

The world holds in its shell of care,

Wrapped well in Faith and pinned by Prayer.

Asleep it lies—

Oh, Tired Eyes!

Oh, Tired Eyes

That plead and pray;

Dost know the price you have to pay

For pearl you prize?

When love lies bleeding at your door,

When heart is weary, sick and sore,

And soul cries out to God: "No more!"

Then Peace awakes—Life's dream is o'er—

The mortal dies!

Oh, Tired Eyes!

SOUL BELLS

If thy thought tones ring in rythm
 Echo circling through the air,
They will reach the rock of Wisdom
 In that unseen world—somewhere!
So let heart ring out its longing
 All its sadness and despair!
Silver Soul Bells softly chiming
 Sing an answer to your prayer.
Trust the God Who gave you reason
 Place yourself within His care;
All this worldly strife forgetting
 Peace awaits you—over there.

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

Faith.

A Flame thought enkindled in mind of man
By friction of forces—when life began!
The spark that evolves from the Greater Light,
To glimmer and glow through aeons of night
In soul of mortal! And there to combine
The spirit and flesh, with WILL the Divine!

Hope.

A Star set in Faith—so brilliant of ray
The shadows of night are sunbeams of day;
A smouldering fire where courage unscathed
Flashes its code, to the weak and afraid;
Speeding the mortal, caught under the rod,
Onward and upward to the light—of God!

Charity.

A Seed in the heart, by love, softly sown—
That buds and blossoms when once it has grown.
Spreading its sweetness o'er sad lives here,
Bringing forth smiles from the sob and the tear.
Faith, Hope and Charity—trine of the Soul!
The greater the part, the greater the whole.

CHARACTER

Know ye, that Thought is living Force

Creative spirit fire!

It moulds the seeds within mind cells

Till Deeds birth from Desire!

And then Soul seals with memory

Each act that feeds life's pyre!

And thus a Thought creation doth

Become a thing of power!

Weaving a web of character

Around each mortal sower!

And then Soul spins from joys, from sins,

A spirit weed or flower.

JUST A WOMAN

Different am I from the rest;
Be my verses or prose the best;
 Dear, I'm but a woman!
Full of fancies, full of fads,
Just as many "goods" as "bads!"
 Men, I like to fool 'em!
Heart goes hungry, always so—
Someway life is filled with woe!
 All the world seems dreary;
Though 'mid many, yet alone!
No one understands my tone—
 And I'm weary, weary!

WE WONDER!

When we reach the highest round
On the ladder, known as Fame!
When we backward look and down
On the blind, the halt, the lame,
'Mong the masses on the ground—
Struggling upward, for a name!
Then we wonder of life's blessings;
What they are and how they came—
Kicking, cuffing—cursing, bluffing—
All for self, this mighty game!
If the spirit still goes onward
Through a hell of fire and flame!
If the soul fights for its freedom,
Gaining heights by price of shame!
If the God will praise or censure,
When our recompense we claim
For the bruised and broken bodies,
Earth life held and Fate did main!
And we wonder—yes, we wonder—
Whom to blame, whom to blame!

THE ROSE

(To Mary Pratt Hixon)

'Tis but a flower—
And yet, within
There lies the essence of creative power—
Life's origin!
Though petals fall
And soon decay.
Their fragrance rises sweet—beyond recall
And lives—alway!
The Thoughts, I breathe
Upon the air
Meet memories—and in the Silence, wreathe
A mist of prayer!
Immortal dew,
That Peace rainbows
And o'er thy spirit spreads, when dreams come true;
And disappointment doors, divide—for you,
Letting the rays of Life's Great Star shine through!
Thy Soul—the Rose.

So long as mental action
Throws Thought from tone to tone,
So long will Human Nature
Rue acts that it has sown ;
We cannot drink of pleasure
Without its dregs of pain—
More easy to regret a Right,
Than right a Wrong, again !

FOR YOU:

(To Josephine)

The garden gate of "Allah"
Fate opens wide, for you;
And under orange blossoms
Your life unfolds, anew.
And as you tread Time's pathway
Where days fold months in years,
May roses shed their love leaves
Dew dipped in happy tears;
And may all thorns and thistles
Drop harmless by the way,
As wedded love grows stronger
And sweeter, day by day;
For always pain and pleasure
Are halves, that make a whole—
And home is where the heart is,
For God mates soul with soul.

WISDOM

On Life's great tree the tiny buds
Of Knowledge burst in bloom;
And every day a full blown rose
Lights up the way of gloom;
And day by day, the petals fall,
—Life's pathway, deep bestrew—
Withered and worn, by tempest torn,
All wet with teardrops dew!

And every leaf a story tells
As softly flitting fast
They coil and curl, and bury deep
The Present in the Past!
So all the joys, and all the pains,
That make our lives complete,
Lie huddled close in withered dreams
As dust—beneath our feet!

And when the spirit seeks its God,
And mercy hopes to win;
The lessons here that life has taught,
Shall cleanse away all sin!
For every heart must have its woes,
'Tis Nature's firm decree;
And all our thoughts and all our acts
We gather from Life's Tree!

(To Peggy Van Braam)

It is with purple pansies

I say to you, adieu!

And ere their petals perish

May all day dreams, come true;

May love with spirit sunshine, spin

The veil Fate holds for you,

And through its mesh may sorrow tears

As diamonds, sparkle through

And all their brilliant colors flash

In flame of joy, o'er you.

THE WOMAN SLAVE

(New York Journal, February 12, 1915)

So choked by twisted threads of toil,
That twirl and twine her in their coil,
She scarce can breathe! The very air
Seems filled with sewing—everywhere!
And stitch by stitch, a silent thread
Shapes spirit shroud to hold—the dead
Ah me, so tired of life's tares!
For no one cares, no one cares.

So slow the work, so low the pay—
No time to rest, or read, or play;
The body thirsts and hungers so,
Its spirit has no chance to grow.
All warped and withered by the sun
Of toil, the toil that's never done!
With blunted morals—bought and sold—
She's hopeless, homeless, growing old.

O ye, who own the mill and shop
Where woman's blood drips drop by drop;
You grind your grist from bodies WILL!
You rob its flesh of food, until
The soul grows sick and weak and small,
And soon there is no soul, at all!
You sap the seed of life—God gave,
And kill what Christ bade you to save!

Increase the wages! That's the way
To teach the hungry how to pray;
To shape the shell that covers soul,
To help it, heal it, make it whole!
If Workers, value full, received—
For charity, there'd be no need;
And millions would not centre so—
If Capital let Labor—grow!

O ye, who books and Bibles give,
While starving bodies shriek to live!
While women gaunt and underfed,
Sew out their lives for daily bread!
When you for judgment, stand alone
Before the Force—the Great Unknown!
Then Justice shall Life's Law complete—
As ye have measured, ye shall mete!

THY WILL BE DONE

Dear Heart, if thou canst conquer pain
So that its sorrows' leaves no stain—

'Tis well for you!

If thou canst sweetly smile and sing
While tortured soul, lies quivering—

Thou'rt brave and true!

When eye meets eye without a fear
That misery will show its tear,

To any one!

Ah, then Dear Heart, kneel down and pray:

“Father, I thank thee for this day—

Through Christ, the Son!”

Spirit and matter—one, are they,

When with bowed head the lips can say:

“THY WILL BE DONE!”

PESSIMISM

Pessimistic, am I? Well

Know you not the sweetest draught
Mortal lips hath ever quaffed

Holds the bitter dregs of Hell
Within its depths! While you drain

Every drop—drinking, drinking,
Hope is ever sinking—sinking,

Dragging Sorrow in its train!

Ah, my friend, 'tis well to know

Joy reaps pain! that both are kin.
Knowledge shields the soul from sin!

Helps to ward and weather woe.
Optimism—leads astray

With its false and fickle star!

Pessimism—shines afar

Twinkling Truth's unerring ray!

INDIVIDUALITY

Fill each hour with good intentions,
Pave each year with new inventions;
Let every dollar that you earn
Bring forth some fruit from Wisdom's urn;
Enrich brain-soil with spray of thought
Until the manhood God has wrought
Within you, shall stand forth—alone!
Fearless, honest, upright—Your OWN!

(To Mrs. E. M. Ryder)

I send a Birthday Greeting
 To you—my Lady, dear!
I send in rhythmic rythm
 Good will, good health, good cheer;
May every sorrow sadness
 That holds thy heart-hurt tear,
Evolve into a gladness
 And silver shadows, here;
May sunlight's sweet contentment
 Shine o'er thy birthday—clear,
Each ray, a thought to treasure—
 From friends both far and near;
I send you Happy Greetings—
 Good will, good health, good cheer.

THE HARVEST

If apples all were sweet and sound;
If hearts could woo without a wound;
If this wild rose might ever be
As sweet and fair as now—you see,
This life would be one song of joy,
No note of discord could destroy.

But every apple has its worm:
And every heart its sorrow germ.
This pretty rose lives but a day—
Its fragrance e'en will pass away;
For nothing ever lasts, you know!
This life is all a fleeting show.

So men may moan, and women weep,
As moon and stars their vigil keep;
For love shall sing its lullaby
With lips, that lie—to hearts, that die!
Until at last—all sowers reap
The harvest, of an endless sleep!

KARMA

All the little threads of Thought
Memory in its mesh has caught,
And in knotted warp has wrought
The smile, the tear!

Spins the Present, into Past;
Larger grows life's web—and fast—
Time shall break it loose, at last;
Its hope, its fear!

Fate, unwind the strands of Light
From thy distaff—Infinite!
Woof my warp in spotless white—
My weft weave clear!

TROUBLED SOUL

(Question and Answer)

Question

And ever the days go by—

A laugh, a frown, a tear!

Unfolding Faith—from Future,

To cover—Present, Fear!

That knots and snarls the Past,

As year crowds close on year.

And ever we look forward

To visions, bright and blue;

And ever looking backward

We watch them fade from view

And always blindly struggling

—When sorrow strikes, to ~~win~~—

To smother sobbing heart cries

With words, “It is HIS will!”

If all our thoughts are Forces

That blend with those—Most High!

Where is the God, our Father,

That He hears not our cry!

Why are our lives so empty!

I ask you?—tell me why!

Must this life be always dreary,

Is there naught but Death, ahead?

Must this constant wishing, longing—

That on which my heart has fed!

Last while life is in the body,

Last until my soul has fled!

I am weary! O so weary,

And I wish that I were dead!

TRoubLED SOUL.

(Question and Answer)

Answer

Woman, crush thy bitter longing!
Is this world a vale of tears—
Does not sunshine intermingle
With the shadows o'er thy years ?
If your heart is fed by trouble
If your life looks bleak and bare
And your soul is weary waiting—
Waiting to be freed from care;
Then 'tis time that Duty roused thee!
Time to hear another call!
You must turn your thoughts to others,
You must work, for one and all!
You will find, my weary woman,
That your troubles howe'er deep—
Will, in doing good to others,
Help to find the rest you seek!

THE TROUBLED SOUL

(Question and Answer)

Question

O 'twas but a moment
 I lost my self control
And let the cry of anguish
 Surging through my soul,
Escape the well closed lips
 Pride locks with mute patrol!
Do you know the sorrow
 That slowly, day by day,
Saps the seeds of gladness
 That fall on my pathway.
Ah, have pity, stranger—
 Judge kindly, I implore!
You know not the sadness
 That lies within my door!
I have worked for others;
 Have striven all in vain
To crush that bitter longing,
 That ceaseless, gnawing pain!
I conquer for a moment
 And then—'twill rise again
O my God! my life is dreary!
Tired of laughter, and of jest—
I am waiting by the river,
Waiting—to lie down and rest!
Give me strength to keep my sorrows
Locked within, that none may see!
Till my days on earth are ended,
And my soul ascends to—Thee!

THE TROUBLED SOUL

(Question and Answer)

Answer

Woman, pause—if but a moment;
Lift your soul above this strife!
Lean on God! and He will help you
Battle all the ills of life!
And when He is ready for you,
Call you to His Home, on High!
Peace, and love with joy unbounded—
Shall reward you—by and by!

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

You—who guard our Flag of Freedom!

Warders, of our country's care;

See you not the danger signals

Flashing warnings, through the air ?

Angry thoughts in clouds of mourning

Sweeping eastward, in their pall!

Are your lights well filled and burning?

—Read the writing on the wall!

You—who in your moneyed madness

Shower gifts across the sea;

Hear you not “home duties” calling?

Labor, starving—pleads to thee.

Waken! First build up YOUR nation!

Store the wheat! You'll need it all;

Fill the lights, and keep them burning!

—Read the writing on the wall!

Shot and shell with voice of thunder

Flame their message to you, here!

Prime your army, prop your navy;

Watch your coast line—War, is near!

United States, guard well, “Old Glory!”

Stars and Stripes, must never fall!

Keep your lights well filled and burning!

—READ THE WRITING ON THE WALL!

LIFE

Alone! With ashes of the Past
So thickly 'round they hold me fast,
And cover with their dust, my brain;
My empty hands reach out in prayer—
My aching heart in its despair
Calls out to God for help, in vain!

Alone! And yet, with smiling face,
The world and I keep on apace;
It knoweth not my war with Life.
The dusky ashes choke and blind—
I gasp for air! Ah, God, be kind!
Call home this soul, so worn with strife!

ETERNALIZED

Deep in the great heart of Silence
There pulses—Omnipotent WILL!
Vibrating Forces, through ether,
The birth-cells of Nature to fill;
Sending forth Soul on Life's journey
For world-waves to toss and to tear,
With but a Faith-line to cling to
That's worn with its ages of wear.

Time, with its tidal emotions,
Loosens the links of Life's chain,
Sweeping the spirit of mortal
Away from all pleasure and pain—
Away from virtues and vices,
The vortex of fortune and fame;
Soul, spirit—winged from Life's lessons,
Goes back to the SOURCE, whence it came!

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